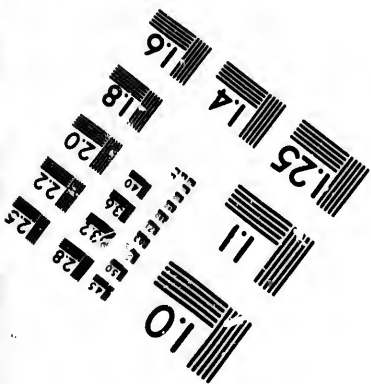
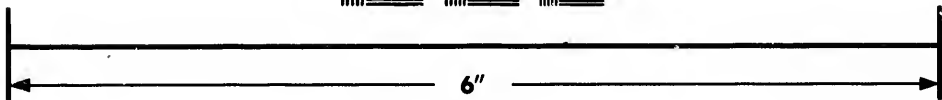
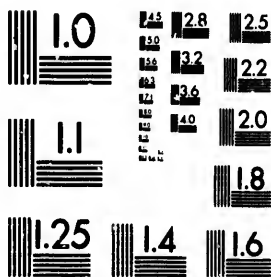


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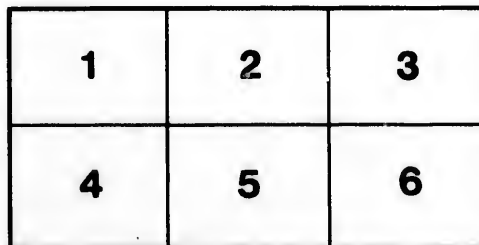
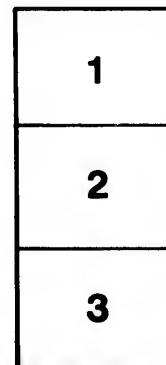
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EM

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

PLAN AND PRINCIPLES

OF A

SOCIETY,

WHICH IS

PROPOSED TO BE FORMED IN MONTREAL,

FOR

THE ATTAINMENT AND SECURITY OF UNIVERSAL AND
PERFECT

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND EQUALITY,

AND FOR THE

IMMEDIATE AND ENTIRE ABOLITION OF ALL INVIDIOUS
DISTINCTIONS IN FAVOR OF ONE SECT TO THE EXCLU-
SION OR DISPARAGEMENT OF ANOTHER.

MONTREAL:

PRINTED AT THE COURIER OFFICE.

1836.

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PROSPECTUS.

SEVERAL gentlemen having observed with regret, that the Constitutional Associations seem either wholly to have overlooked, or at least not sufficiently to have estimated, the importance, (might we not say the necessity,) of the recognition of the perfect equality of all religious sects and denominations in these Colonies, and of the equal dispensation to all—or equal withdrawing from all—of Government bounty and patronage; and being well persuaded that this oversight is one that will be fatal, in the issue, to the success of all other means that may be employed to restore order and tranquillity to this now distracted country, to cement harmony and union among the component parts of society, and to confirm and perpetuate general attachment to the Parent State; and being deeply impressed with the conviction that now is the favorable moment for bringing about a consummation so devoutly to be wished, which, if not promptly seized and improved, may not soon again recur, have resolved to form themselves into a Society for this special purpose, and preparatory to their calling a public meeting, have deemed it advisable, through the medium of the press, to submit a statement of their principles and views, that all may have it in their power to form a deliberate and mature judgment in regard to the design and constitution of the proposed Association. The following series of propositions exhibits, in substance, the principles on which it is proposed that this Society shall be constituted, and the ends and objects to the promotion and accomplishment of which its exertions are to be directed:—

Proposition 1.—It is not competent for any human authority to interfere, directly or indirectly, with the exercise of the sacred right of conscience, or to employ any other means of influencing or controuling the exercise of this natural inherent right of every rational and moral being, save the powers of argument and persuasion operating upon the mind in the fullest possession of its unbiassed freewill.

Proposition 2.—This great and sacred prerogative of man is violated not only when a government usurps the power of suppressing liberty of conscience by direct persecution, but is also more or less infringed in giving to one sect or party honors, emoluments and privileges which are withheld from another, merely because the latter, in the equally conscientious exercise of the common right, may have been led to the adoption of opinions and principles different from those of the former.

Proposition 3.—Even if it did come within the legitimate province of a government to prescribe or influence the religious creed of their subjects, or to bias their minds for or against any system of opinions or principles whatsoever, it is manifest that such an application of its powers could not be directed with perfect wisdom and integrity, so as not to prejudice truth on the one hand, or to promote and patronize error on the other; and for these reasons it is obviously inconsistent with the very nature of a free and enlightened government, to admit any partial invidious distinctions, grounded upon the conscientious differences of mankind, *on a subject* in which all are not only entitled by nature, but bound by conscience, to assert and exercise their equal liberty; and since all have an equal right, in no respect affected by conscientious differences, to enjoy in equal measure all the benefits which Government can impart, religious exclusions and preferences are, by necessary consequence, repugnant to the obligations of the Government, and to the rights of the subject.

Proposition 4.—All arguments in favor of exclusive religious establishments, which have been urged, founded upon the peculiar circumstances of the Parent Country, are wholly inapplicable to those of British America. Even in the Parent Country, an order of things has arisen widely different from that which existed at the time of the Reformation, when these establishments were founded; and many evils and inconveniences, which were unforeseen at that period, are now forcing upon Government the necessity of modifications and reforms in the constitutions of Ecclesiastical Communities connected with the State, of which it is not easy to anticipate the final results. How extremely unwise and impolitic, therefore, is the attempt to force these establishments upon the Colonies of British North America, in which the state of society is not only widely different from that of Britain, but in almost every respect identical with that of the United States.

Proposition 5.—A determination on the part of the British Government to persist in the ill-judged policy of introducing into these Colonies religious establishments, which do not comprehend within their joint pales even a moiety of the Protestant population, will involve them, ultimately, in the most embarrassing and inextricable perplexity—will enkindle the flames of sectarian animosity—of intestine discord—will produce disaffection and hostility in the minds of all who are excluded from participation in the honors and advantages conferred on the privileged parties—will prevent the free, full, and unrestrained growth and developement of our institutions, as well as of the energies of the population—in fine, will prove equally detrimental to the peace and prosperity of the Colonies, and to the best interests of true religion; nor can it be doubted, on the other hand, that the early and satisfactory settlement of this question would go a great way not only to extinguish the flames of faction and party spirit which are now raging, but to remove the chief fuel which feeds these flames.

Proposition 6.—There is such an intimate connection between religious and educational establishments, that an ascendancy in the one

necessarily leads to an ascendancy in the other; and the system, therefore, is productive of double wrong—of double mischief; while it places in the hands of the privileged bodies the two most powerful engines for maintaining and perpetuating their domination.

In accordance with the principles and views embodied in the foregoing propositions, it is proposed to establish a Society for the attainment and security of universal and perfectly equal religious liberty to the inhabitants of these Colonies, without exception or distinction—to secure and perpetuate a perfect equality in regard to all the rights and interests connected with religion and education—to secure to all persons, of all parties and denominations, their natural inalienable right to the enjoyment and exercise of the fullest and most unfettered liberty of conscience, without forfeiting, in any result of the exercise of that right, not incompatible with the peace and safety of society, their just proportional share in the dispensation of the Government favor and bounty for the support and promotion of the great ends of religion and education, and an equal participation, as well in the direction and government of the institutions established for these ends, as in all the honors, emoluments, privileges and advantages connected with them.

It is proposed that, for the accomplishment of these great ends of its institution, the Society shall adopt and prosecute with all promptitude and vigor, such legal and constitutional means and measures as they may deem most expedient and effectual for the purpose of exposing and counteracting the arts and machinations of those individuals or parties whose aim may be to usurp an exclusive or an undue influence and ascendancy in the management of the institutions and disposal of the funds appropriated to the purposes aforesaid, and shall co-operate with all individuals, societies, and public bodies, who may be disposed to enter into their views, in order to obtain, with the least delay possible, the complete triumph of principles which are essential to the peace, prosperity, and happiness of the Colonies, as well as to the continuation of their connection with the Parent Country.

It is proposed that, for the propagation of these principles, and the accomplishment of these ends, the Society should with all promptitude and vigor avail itself, to the utmost attainable degree, of the support and advocacy of the liberal press throughout these Colonies—should recommend and, by all means in its power, promote the formation of similar societies in British America—should co-operate with all Legislative bodies, Constitutional Associations and individuals favorable to their cause, in the promotion of this vital liberty in matters of religion and education, as the only foundation and the best security of all liberty, civil and political, and of almost every national blessing.

From this prospectus of the plan and principles on which it is proposed that this Society for the consummation of Religious Liberty in these Colonies, shall be founded, the public will be enabled to form some estimate of the importance of the design, and of its bearing upon the vital interests of the whole community.

For the further exposition and enforcement of the principles and views above stated, it has appeared to the originators of this project, that it might be of advantage to subjoin a fuller analysis—a more ample development of a subject of such universal and deep interest to man in his moral, political, and religious capacity.

All true liberty is based upon, and draws its vital power and spirit from that primary and essential liberty, mental and moral, which secures to us the fullest exercise of the right of thinking, judging and acting, according to our own views of propriety, duty or interest, so long and so far as we do not thereby infringe any of the just and equal rights of our fellow-men. Public opinion is only of value—is only entitled to authority and respect, so far as it is founded upon and flows from the due exercise of this personal and moral freedom, secured to every member of the community alike, without any other reservation or restriction than that which may be requisite for the public safety, or the well-being of the whole. In order that public opinion, which, in every state enjoying ought that deserves the name of liberty, is the great arbiter and regulator of all public measures, may be, in general, a true and trustworthy index of the real interests of the community, it must be duly enlightened. It is manifest, therefore, that those organs whose end is to form, to mould, to influence *public opinion*—that power which moves, controuls, and directs all free government—must be of paramount importance. Those organs of the social system, which are formed with a view to impart the blessings of knowledge, science, civility, morality, religion—which stamp the first impressions upon the youthful mind, determining in a great measure its future principles and tendencies—which form all the members of the same community to their general habits of thinking, judging, and deciding on all questions interesting to the individual or to society—those organs, in fine, which are constantly acting upon the minds of all young or old, and thereby with a sure, though it may be insensible influence, determining the opinions, principles and habits of the whole social body—like the spirit of life and intelligence actuating and informing what otherwise were an inert, passive, senseless mass—must be allowed to possess a power and an importance which it is scarcely possible to exaggerate.

Such are the institutions by which provision is made, in any country, for the education of youth; for the diffusion of religious knowledge and the inculcation of religious principle, as the foundation and security of public morals; and the *press*, the grand organ of all the manifold and multifarious influences which can emanate from human minds and hearts, to affect other minds and hearts with every variety of opinion, sentiment and impression.

Liberty consists, primarily and essentially, in preserving these institutions, as much as possible, unfettered, uncontrouled, uninfluenced by any sect or party, or which, in its ultimate and general effect, will be nearly tantamount to this, by giving to all parties equal scope and advantage, in proportion to their number and weight, to govern and influence the various organs for the direction of public opinion. It will

be the first, the supreme care of every free and enlightened government, to provide that these institutions may act with vigour, uncramped, unenfeebled—that they may have their perfect work—that they may attain their full expansion—that they may offer their benefits to all alike—that they may unite the culture and discipline of a sound education, intellectual, philosophical, moral, religious—and the diffusion of knowledge, pure and unalloyed—with the freest and most unrestrained exercise of the mental faculties. *Public opinion*, in every free country, is that power which is above the throne, above the sceptered sway—to which not only monarchs and their ministers, but legislators themselves, must bow, or be crushed or overthrown by its resistless force. Its power is only second to the supremacy—to the omnipotence of truth—of whom it holds its right, and to whom alone it owes subjection. This is the *primum mobile*—the main-spring of the political world. What is it that forms, moves, regulates this mighty engine—what chiefly binds and tames this Leviathan, and makes it the beneficent agent of Deity, in furthering the enlightenment, improvement, and happiness of our race? It is the free action and influence of the institutions for the education of the people, for their intellectual, moral, religious, political instruction. And what adequate security can we have that these great organs are purifiers and not perverters—that they are enlightening the mind with truth, not darkening it with error and prejudice—that they are imparting, wholesome nourishment, and not infecting it with the virus of party spirit, of sectarian bigotry, of moral or political heresy?

The only security which we can have for their sound, healthy and beneficent action, as well as their full vigor, their full expansion—is to provide for their perfect freedom—to preclude all partial or exclusive controul—to leave them open to the scrutiny and censorship of men of all parties, who have an equal interest in them and no common bond to one another save truth, nature, reason, and that community of feeling and interest which subsists between them as men and members of the same commonwealth—to let in upon them the full light of the public eye—to subject them always and unreservedly to the prying, searching, unsparing scrutiny of public opinion, and to warrant and countenance its strictest inquisitions; and on all points of doubt or difference, to submit the ultimate decision to this high tribunal, to which truth makes her final appeal.—For, as every man's reason and conscience are, with respect to himself, the ultimate judges, from whose sentence there lies no appeal to any higher tribunal on earth; so public opinion, which is the aggregation or collective amount of the several judgments and decisions of every man's reason and conscience in all questions of right, duty or interest affecting the community, is the supreme arbiter of the political and social world. And it may be assumed as an axiom, or self-evident truth, that the decisions of public opinion will be enlightened and salutary, just in the same degree that we secure the purity, or in other words, the freedom of the institutions for education, for

moral, religious, political instruction, and allow them full scope to operate, to expand, to diffuse through the whole society their beneficent influences, in just measure and proportion to every part.

Let us suppose, then, that, in any country, the institutions for general or for religious education, are sound, liberal, unfettered, untainted—that the minds of youth are trained to seek truth in the love of it, without any bias or prepossession—that they are prepared at a mature age, to form just estimates, enlightened opinions—that all are thus qualified to exercise with wisdom and independence the duties of citizens, in all the various relations of society, and of severally contributing their parts to the service of the country, and to the administration and improvement of its laws and institutions—that all are united in the equal, free and full participation of all the honors, privileges and advantages which are at the disposal of the Government or of the community—that the door of honor and advancement is open to all—that every scope and encouragement is held out to their energies, intellectual and moral, and the greatest rewards proposed alike to the humblest and highest of the candidates; shall not such a country flourish and prosper? What more can it need to perpetuate its freedom—to perfect the development of all its resources and capabilities, natural and moral? In the minds, the hearts of the people, in their awakened energies, in their cultivated faculties, are the primary, the inexhaustible sources of its prosperity and power; for, free and enlightened opinion, the fruit of a sound unfettered education, is the spring of national life, health, vigor, liberty, glory and happiness. If it be a ground of just triumph, when the trade, manufactures and commerce of a country are flourishing; how much more, when the minds of a people are receiving in the highest measure the most perfect cultivation, to enrich and enlighten them. This is the original tillage, out of which the whole harvest of national improvement and happiness grows.

Such is a general abstract view of the tendency and effects of *perfect and universal liberty of the conscience and of the mind—religious and intellectual*—upon the prosperity and happiness of a country, and of the means by which it is to be secured and perpetuated; namely, by committing it to the custody, care, guardianship of the whole community, in giving to all, without respect of persons or parties, their just proportional share of influence and controul.

To the foregoing remarks—designed to expound and illustrate those great general principles upon which is founded the claim of equal and unrestricted religious freedom to all—a freedom not merely negative but positive—involving, with an exemption from all disabilities on the ground of conscientious differences, a fair participation of all advantages—we shall subjoin a few observations on the support and confirmation, which these principles derive from facts and experience.

With this view it is important to trace the rise of the present religious establishments of Europe, and the circumstances in which they were originally founded, and to compare them with the now existing state

of society—with the spirit of our own times, and with the condition, actual or prospective, of British America.

When LUTHER, and the other early Reformers, revolted against the Papal Church, it was a matter of necessity that they should call in the aid of the temporal or civil power, to support them against an infuriate enemy and persecutor, employing with remorseless rigor civil pains and penalties, corporeal tortures, and death itself, to suppress what it held in abhorrence as heresy and mortal sin. The Reformers were then, be it remembered, one undivided body. Their union in the common cause was cemented by the sense of common danger. Had it not been the dictate of conscience, and in full accordance with the views then entertained by the Reformers, the imperious necessity of self-preservation would have constrained the Church to enter into alliance or union with the state. In such circumstances it was, in a manner, unavoidable that religious establishments should be founded under the protection or patronage of the state, and more or less intimately connected with the civil constitution. It was not to be expected that any other views could enter into the minds of the first Reformers; there was nothing in the history of the past—nothing in the actual state of the Church, or of the world, at the time, to suggest other and more enlightened views. Nor is it to be wondered, if, in the peculiar circumstances of those times, when the most violent and formidable assaults were made and the boldest and most extensive combinations entered into to destroy in their infancy the Reformed Churches, the object of effectuating the most complete union between the Church and the State, as well as of enforcing, not seldom by means which in our more enlightened times none will attempt to justify, internal union among the members, should have been one nearest to the heart of every zealous Reformer of that day. For some time these new establishments, though assailed with storms from without, enjoyed internal peace, order, unity. There was no perceptible rent or division. But it too soon appeared that there were the principles—the elements of disunion in the very constitution of the new fabrics. Too much of the old leaven of intolerance and persecution was retained. The monarch usurped powers in matters ecclesiastical, similar in nature, and little short in degree, of those arrogated by the Pope. The progress of vital reform was arrested. Corruptions were embodied in the new system. Those again soon produced their natural and proper fruits—schisms and dissensions, ruptures and separations, feuds, civil—and worse than civil—religious wars. The number of dissentients from the State Church increased, until they equalled, or even sometimes outnumbered, the members of the establishment. The consequences proved highly prejudicial to the public peace and prosperity, as well as to the interests of religion. In the successive rise of new sects and the progressive increase of their numbers, divisions were gradually multiplied and extended until not only the ecclesiastical unity was broken and destroyed, but the safety, independence, and almost the very existence of the nation was

endangered by religious factions. Thus there soon arose, after the Reformation, an order of things totally unlike to that out of which the ecclesiastical establishments originally had sprung.

Exposed to no formidable enemy from without, the Church needed not any longer to invoke to her succour the arm of the civil power. She had no danger to apprehend from the advantage that might be taken of her internal divisions or weaknesses by foreign antagonists, and consequently no plea, no pretext to resort to violence or persecution for the preservation of the national safety. At the same time, the ideas of civil and religious liberty—of the equal right of all men to enjoy equal protection and favor from the government under which they lead quiet and peaceable lives—have been progressively enlarging since that memorable era, until they are now vastly in advance of what they were at this early period, and have acquired universally a fast hold of the minds of men. The question now is perfectly fair, perfectly natural—Are any modifications required in those institutions which were the product of a comparatively rude and barbarous age?—and this question ought to be met at least with moderation and good feeling. Is it wise or politic in the present times, even in countries where such establishments are of old standing and have taken deep root, to refuse all concessions to the numerous bodies of Dissenters? and if concessions are to be made, at what point shall we stop? In point of fact, if we look even to the Catholic States of Europe, we shall find that in the progress of liberal sentiment and liberal Government, they are, in this particular instance, greatly in advance of Britain herself. Another question may now be fairly proposed, which deserves serious consideration and full and unbiassed discussion. Is it conducive either to the honor or to the interest of true religion in any country, to hold any large body of the population tributary to the religion or church of the majority? The question is unavoidable, amid the growing light, intelligence and freedom of our age; and we ought to enter into the discussion of it with all fairness, honesty and independence. “*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*” Our sentiments, our views, our institutions, must not remain stationary, unaffected, unmodified by the vast and rapid and universal changes which are taking place in human affairs—in an age of which it may be said “old things are passing away, and behold all things are made new.” In those countries, indeed, where establishments have long been in existence, where they are interwoven with the whole political fabric—where the feelings or the prejudices of the people are so deeply rooted that they will only slowly yield to the force of time, to the growing progress of light, knowledge and social improvement—countries in which the establishments in question, have struck deep their roots and overshadowed, like some aged and venerable tree, with their far spreading branches, the whole land—it is a startling proposition, to say, abruptly and without long and solemn deliberation, let us cut down this venerable tree and lay its branches in the dust. But there can be no hesitation in candidly receiving and weighing another suggestion, which says, suffer the time-hallowed, deep-rooted establishment to exist, but

subject it to such gradual and necessary modifications and reforms, as may adapt it to the spirit and circumstances of our age; and should it appear that the day must come, when its exclusive privileges must be withdrawn, let this be done by a process of gradual and almost insensible retrenchment, so that it may expire without a struggle or a groan—so that no shock may be given to the other institutions of the country, or the natural feelings of honest attachment or reverential affection with which the people, or at least a large proportion of them, may regard it. Emancipate meanwhile as much as possible, as early as possible, all who may conscientiously differ from the establishment, from any disqualifications or disabilities, civil or political; and, if possible, release them from the payment of any tribute, in any shape, directly or indirectly, to an institution which has no hold of their affections, of their conscience, and which renders them no return of service or benefit for the support which they are made to contribute to it. The truly enlightened and disinterested advocate of establishments, even in countries where they have long stood and flourished, will plead for them, on no other grounds—than their actual usefulness—their salutary efficiency—or their vital and indissoluble connection with the constitution and polity of the nation—with the whole social fabric. He will offer no resistance to any reasonable reforms and ameliorations calculated to extend their efficiency, to lighten their expense and burdensomeness, and to relieve the estates as well as the consciences of those who may not approve or adhere to them, from any forced imposition or exaction.

But whatever tenderness, whatever just regard may be due to ancient establishments, in countries where they are interwoven with the whole fabric of society, and have taken fast hold of the feelings and affections of the people, or the majority of the people, we do conceive that in the present state and spirit of the world, there is little wisdom or sense in the attempt to introduce them into new countries, even in the most favorable case, when there is, which if possible is certainly very rare, a uniformity of religious sentiment, likely to be of some continuance; or at least, a great majority of the population decidedly attached to one particular church or communion. But when the whole community is split into a multiplicity of sects, many of them nearly equally balanced in point of number and influence, and when it may be expected that, in the natural course of things, others, now inconsiderable, will grow speedily into magnitude and strength; when, in fine, no system of comprehension can be devised, which would not leave out a great and formidable proportion of the population—*save the extension of equal liberty and favor to all*—we deem that there can be very little room for hesitation—especially as it appears, if we are correct in the general views contended for in the first part of this prospectus, that all sound and enlightened principles, philosophical and political, draw powerfully and pointedly in the same direction, and as it were force upon us the same conclusion. The simplest, the safest, the most equitable and popular course, undoubtedly is that of protect-

ing and fostering all with the same impartial care ; or that of leaving all indiscriminately to the resources of their own party—to the efficiency and energy of their own wisdom, zeal and activity, for their own support. One of these two courses a government must choose, under the circumstances which we have specified, or lay it itself open to the eternal annoyance of hostile sects and infuriate factions, and thereby expose society to be torn and distracted by interminable feuds and inextinguishable animosities.

There is a *sophism*, which we often find employed by the designing—and not without considerable impression upon the minds of those who are prone to be influenced by *words* and *phrases*—which they do not subject to any strict analysis—that experience is in favor of the system of religious establishments—that in engrafting them upon the body of our Colonial Constitution, we are treading in the steps of the fathers and founders of British liberty—that we are adopting, in all its integrity and perfection, the great model of the Constitution of our Parent Country. It is easy to unravel and expose this sophistry. We are not, in fact, following the sure tract of experience, when we adopt in British America a system introduced into Europe in the sixteenth century. It is only in the same circumstances of time and place—in the perfect similitude of the form and spirit of society—that we could, with philosophical propriety, be said to follow the example of the ambiguous policy of Europe, in adopting the religious establishments whose origin, even there, is not of modern but of somewhat ancient date. And we are adopting them too, at a crisis, when Britain is convulsed by the struggles which are making to effectuate a radical reform—or, as a very numerous and powerful party would have it, the utter abolition—of these establishments. But this is by no means the full extent of the error or absurdity involved in this kind of reasoning. Is the population of the British American Colonies composed of the same elements, is it actuated by the same spirit, as that of the old country? Would the wise legislators and reformers who introduced the existing ecclesiastical institutions of Britain and of Europe, and moulded them into a form accommodated to the existing circumstances of their age, be disposed to overlook the consideration so material in the determination of the present question, namely, whether they be suited to the spirit of this age and to the state and prospects of society in this new world? Would these great men have attached no weight to the facts, that here the monarchy is not supported by a hereditary and powerful aristocracy—that here the great body of the people are all—and there is no order, no class, of the least weight, of the smallest account, to counterbalance the democracy? Would it not be the height of folly to adopt, in the style of our political architecture, instead of the plain Doric—the luxuriant ornamenting of the Corinthian order? In endeavouring to graft upon the stock of a new and indeed infant society, the parts or branches of an old and very dissimilarly organised body, we are, in truth and in fact, innovating, experimenting; and our novelties and experiments are none of the wisest

or the safest. There is something of more than bold and adventurous originality, in sewing upon the texture of the social web—old fragments, the most dissimilar and ill-matched—the *purpureos pannos*—of the feudal society of Europe, framed in ages of which the genius, character and condition, were at the greatest possible remove from what we now realise in this country, and at this period of the world. Would it not be more like the wise dictates of experience, to wait and watch a little longer the progress of events—to defer the perilous attempt to impose unpopular and untried institutions—to let things remain for a time, at least, as they are; and since the country is in its infancy, and we have not sufficient data to guide us in legislating, at this early stage, upon questions of such vital and essential interest, it would be prudent, to say the least, to avoid rash experiments, hasty decisions, crude theories. The people of America are not the *vile corpus*, to be submitted to hazardous and empirical experiments. It will be soon enough to erect an exclusive and dominant church singular, or churches plural, when time and experience shall demonstrate that we cannot get on without them. This has been the wise policy of the United States, and the lapse of fifty years has not suggested to any of their statesmen or patriots, the most distant idea of transplanting these exotics into the soil of Republican America. If we depart from the same prudent and cautious policy, we shall, I fear, like all unskilful and indiscreet innovators, by the contrast of our temerity and folly, set in the fairest light, the statesman-like sagacity and truly philosophical wisdom of our acute and calculating neighbours. In point of fact, if we enquire how does the perfect equality of all sects and denominations in the United States operate upon the cause of religion, education, and public interest generally, we shall find that it works well, and is decidedly favorable to all these great interests.

This is what might naturally and confidently be expected, reasoning *a priori*, from a system which allows and in a manner invites all to come into the field of competition—to descend into the arena of peaceful and generous emulation. It proffers to all a fair field and no favor, or equal favor. The intelligence, the talent, the learning, the emulation, the activity of all are put in requisition. An appeal is made as it were, to all the generous—to all the selfish principles and passions that are inherent in human nature, and all are drawn forth, stimulated, and made to work together for the common good. The race is to the swift—the battle is to the strong. The prize is awarded to merit, without respect of persons or parties; and the country is thus enabled to avail herself to the uttermost of all the energies and capabilities of all her children. There is no cramping, no repressing, no withering of the spirit or power—of any individual—of any class—there is no influence malign from any quarter to breathe upon them—no jealousy or rivalry of an ascendant or privileged order to depress and to thwart them. The powers of all are developed in the utmost possible degree, and are enlisted and combined in the service of their country in their utmost energy and perfection; and the sum total of their united exertions

gives to the country the complete command of all the resources of nature and art, of intellect and industry, which it is possible to attain. The patronage which, under the exclusive system, is confined to a small number, to a favored few, or at least to a bare or dubious majority, relaxing, not unfrequently, and corrupting where it should have animated and invigorated, is made, in the liberal and enlightened policy of the United States, to flow in numerous and diffusive channels and to circulate to all parts of the body politic, communicating the vital influence and spirit to every member in due order and proportion. By dealing thus equally, thus impartially, with all descriptions of their population, it is evident, from the most obvious and indubitable principles, that a government adds unspeakably to its own strength and stability; and while it facilitates and promotes to the uttermost, the free, the full diffusion of the blessings at its command to all, it thereby effectually allays party and sectarian violence, or at least renders it innocuous, leaving it to evaporate, to expend itself in the strife of wordy contention, and binds into general concord and unity the whole population, who have one equal bond of attachment to the country and to the government. There can be no doubt in the mind of any unbiassed, enlightened observer, of the working of this system in the United States, that it has mainly contributed to produce that rapid and universal developement of the energies of the people, and thereby of the resources of the country, which the whole civilized world are at this day contemplating with astonishment. The ill effects which many superficial or prejudiced observers have attributed to this universal and unlimited freedom and equality of all religious bodies, are, in truth, no effects at all of that liberality, upon which it is endeavored to charge them.

It would be easy, were we at leisure to enter so far into details, to evince that the evils and disorders falsely attributed to this cause, are the consequence of the immaturity and imperfection of the institutions for general education—for the support and advancement of learning and religion—in a country which, if we merely reckon its age by chronological measurement, is still in its infancy. When we reflect upon the circumstances and character of the early population of all the new States and settlements of America, composed of emigrants from the old world, chiefly of the lower orders, combining much of the very dross and refuse of European society, divided into as many various and ill assorted parts or elements as there are diversities of race, language, manners and religion among them; if we follow this motley and promiscuous multitude into the depths of the hitherto untrodden wilderness—if we contemplate them in the aspect which they present on this first stage of their transatlantic existence, thinly scattered over the surface, and severally buried as it were in the womb of the primeval forest, struggling with all the hardships of savage nature, rivetted to the servile drudgery of cutting down the trees, draining the marshes, clearing the soil, destitute as yet of feelings of local attachment, strangers to the land, without the comforts

or the attachments of home and of country—need we wonder if, in such circumstances, we find many uncouth and repulsive traits of character, if we find a hard and stubborn selfishness, if we find man the stoic of the woods, a stranger to the finer sensibilities of civilized life, as well as to its physical comforts and refinements—what wonder, if thus thrown asunder from the bosom of cultivated society and plunged into the wilds which are the native and the proper sphere of savage tribes of hunters and wanderers, with whom he is soon brought into warfare, and naturally contracts some portion of their ferocity—what wonder if his character reflect somewhat of the Aboriginal wildness—what wonder if he relapse into a state of semi-barbarism.

Wanting, in such circumstances, adequate means to make due provision for general education or religious worship, or, if they possessed the means, wanting that union and combination, founded upon identity of religious faith and feeling, which could facilitate the early introduction among them of learned and respectable teachers and pastors—nothing is easier than to account, in the most satisfactory manner, for the religious ignorance and fanaticism which so generally characterise the rude and promiscuous and half savage population of the younger States, and of all the more recent settlements, without imputing it to the comprehensive and truly philosophical liberality of the system now in question. Whatever travellers may have remarked, that is unseemly or indecorous in the manifestations of the religious principle—whatever may have been the just subject of animadversion in their estimate of the spirit, habits and morals of the people—we may easily trace to the disabilities and disadvantages, inseparable from the state of an infant country, in which the various and oft ill-matched elements of society are not yet assimilated, consolidated, united; where the organs of religious and intellectual education are as yet unprovided, or at least rude, defective and imperfectly administered. In judging of the character of this remarkable people, and of the merits of their government and institutions, due allowance, it may be feared, has not been made for the necessarily immature, and may we not add, in many instances, the embryo state of their social organization. Look at those portions of the Union that were the earliest in being settled, the New England States for example, where the means of education and religious instruction are most perfect and in efficient operation, and say what is the aspect of society, intellectual, moral and religious? Are they not actually in advance of the oldest nations of Europe, most famed for the perfection of their institutions? And are they not pressing onward with daily increasing acceleration, and in the course of every twenty years achieving the triumph of centuries? Let any one compute the rapid advancement which these States have made generally during the last twenty years, in art, science and literature—let him calculate the amount of the improvement of all their institutions, religious and educational—let him note the wonderful impulse and acceleration which are now carrying them forward in every path which is important or interesting to civilized man; and he will

be deeply impressed with the conviction, that the system is more powerfully beneficent in its influence, than any that has been realised in past ages; and from what we have already seen of its results, during the short period of its existence and operation, we may confidently form the most favorable augury of its growing efficiency, which promises at no distant day, such a harvest of prosperity and glory, to this already mighty nation, as has never hitherto been paralleled in the annals of the world. In forming an estimate of the state and prospects of this great country, we are always deceiving ourselves and doing her injustice, by not keeping in mind that, as to her national existence, she is but of yesterday—that her institutions, necessarily framed in the first instance prospectively, upon theoretic views, not modelled on the sure and unerring dictates of time and experience, have not yet been sufficiently proved and perfected by trial—are not yet fully corrected, adjusted, harmonized, expanded, matured, confirmed. We need not wonder, therefore, if we find her laboring under partial and temporary disorders and derangements—if we find her occasionally suffering under evils inseparable from the recency and rudeness of her social organization, at least, in some of its departments—and from those irregularities, defects and blemishes, for which time and experience will furnish certain and effectual remedies and correctives. Let it be considered how much has been done, and done well—how vast have been her improvements—how great and rapid her triumphs—and in what a marvellously brief space, little more than fifty years, she has reared such a fabric of national polity and greatness, as to place her already among the foremost nations of the civilized world.

But it may be demanded here, would you then adopt the principles of a Republican Government and apply them to a Monarchy? Would not such a policy soon prove fatal to British ascendancy, dissolve the connection of the Colonies with the Parent Country, and pave the way for our early incorporation with the United States? We reply, that the abolition of all invidious distinctions founded upon the diversity of religious creeds—that the extension on the part of the Government, of universal and equal favor and patronage to all her peaceable, well disposed subjects—is a principle as applicable and as auspicious to a monarchy, as it is natural to a republic. There is already a very near approach to this happy consummation in some of the most irresponsible and arbitrary monarchies of Europe. Britain cannot adopt a wiser course in the treatment of her American Colonies, than to tread as closely as possible in the footsteps of the United States' Government. There would be no wisdom—there would be arrant folly, in squeamishly repudiating those maxims of political prudence which appear to have guided so successfully our Republican neighbours, and to have developed so speedily and effectually their resources and energies. There is nothing to hinder the most perfect extension of all the liberties and privileges enjoyed under the Republic, to those who sit under the shade of the British monarchy.

We can see no natural, no necessary connection between these partial, exclusive, invidious distinctions, and the stability of the throne. Quite the reverse. Believing that the throne of the King, no less than the chair of the President, has its best and most secure foundation in the confidence and attachment of the people, it is at once the highest duty and interest of the Government to conciliate the affections of the people, and to avoid all acts and all courses which would tend to alienate and to disgust any considerable body of the subjects. We are firmly persuaded that it is quite practicable to give to British America all, and perhaps more than all, the advantages of Republican America—to superadd to the universal freedom, impartially and equally secured to all without exception or distinction, the supernumerary and important benefits flowing from the protection, patronage and favor of the parent land, and thereby form an accessory bond to perpetuate our union; and should the day come when that union must terminate, to supply its place, in a great measure, by the deep-rooted feelings of mutual gratitude and affection. What Britain looks to mainly, as her recompense for all that she has done and expended in protecting and fostering us, is the accession of wealth to be derived from the consumption of her manufactures, which must increase with the growth and prosperity of these Colonies. For this purpose, two things are principally to be kept in view by her; first, to keep us in good humour, in a state of good feeling towards her—and let it not be forgotten that by *us*, I mean not the aristocracy, the bureaucracy, the clergy, the clique, or any sect or party severally or particularly; but the body of the people, the great masses of the population, the yeomanry, the agricultural, mercantile, mechanical labouring classes—for here the people is all—the puny and petty aristocracies of every description are as the froth and the bubbles on the surface of the wave: and next to this, it should be the supreme care of Government to remove every obstruction out of the way of the fullest and most rapid development of our resources, of all the capabilities of the country and of the people. And if we seek these ends, what other principles will be found available to guide us to the certain attainment of them, but those for which we are now contending—those which have been so triumphantly successful in the United States—equal liberty, equal right, equal patronage and favor to all. It would be a fatal error to imagine that we shall throw up barriers against the influx of republican principles, by interdicting the adoption or imitation of what is good, and wise, and suitable to our circumstances, exigencies and interests in the economy of our neighbours. Would we guard the population of these Colonies from being infected with an admiration of, a preference for, the system of our great rival—then give them all, freely and unreservedly, and cheerfully, which they may be supposed likely to covet or envy in that system; establish such an order of things in British America, that, after the most deliberate survey and comparison of both, we may feel disposed to rest with contentment and complacency in the lines which have fallen to us—in our own goodly portion and

heritage. Would you take the shortest and surest road to drive our whole population into the arms of the United States—to wean us from monarchy—to fix and rivet our attachment on republicanism—then follow the counsels of those placemen and pensioners, of those prelates and parsons, of those would-be aristocrats and oligarchs, who advise the establishment of a government by influence—a government founded upon principles of bigotry and exclusion—upon principles of favoritism and partiality. These views may be vituperated and condemned, nay, will most certainly be so, and by a party who have professions of loyalty, patriotism and British feeling on their lips, but little or nothing of them in their hearts—by men who, regardless of the public good, are only intent upon building up their own fortunes and those of their families—who are seeking their own aggrandizement in that of their party; but they are the only principles which will afford a safe directory to guide the Colonial Government in the course of an enlightened and successful policy, and if it do not act in accordance with these views, it will soon lose its hold on the confidence and affection of the people, and will continue to experience increasing embarrassment and opposition, until it is finally arrested and overthrown.

It is impossible to contemplate the state of British America, present or prospective, and not to be impressed with the overwhelming conviction, that the only system adapted to it, is one of the most generous and comprehensive liberality. Look at the component parts and elements of society in these Colonies, and ask, can any thing be imagined more preposterous than the idea of engrafting upon such a stock the establishments of the old world?

The population of the Townships, and the vast majority of that of Upper Canada, composed of emigrants or the descendants of emigrants from the United States, and of others thoroughly imbued with their feelings, political and religious, will never be reconciled to such a system—will never tolerate it.

In the minds of the Irish Catholics the idea of Protestant establishments is execrated as the revival in America of the odious Ecclesiastical and Orange Domination which is the curse of Ireland, and from which they had hoped to find refuge in this new world.

Roman Catholics of all nations, will naturally regard with more than aversion, the policy which aims at raising a Protestant Church to an ascendancy over the Papal, levelling her from her present elevation—if not immediately, yet gradually and insensibly—by the progressive development of the system in question—to a footing with the most obscure and inconsiderable sects. The longer the Government appears to cling to this policy, the less will they possess of the confidence and attachment of the most numerous of all our religious communities, at least in Canada. A policy objectionable at all times, and in all circumstances; because it is essentially false, iniquitous, oppressive—has its mischievous influence unspeakably aggravated in these Colonies, by the unfortunate conjunction of national, party, and political prejudices with religious jealousies. The French Catholics, forming a great majority of our entire population, already disaffected and in a

state of almost open and avowed hostility to Government, are not likely to be soothed, to be conciliated, by the prospect of having their Church depressed and humiliated by the dominancy of a powerful and ambitious rival.

The whole body of the Protestant Dissenters—a term, by the bye, scarcely applicable to them in these Colonies, so long as there is an ambiguity as to the existence of an Established Church, properly so called—already exceeding in number the sum total of the members of the two Established Churches, and, judging from the history of the United States, likely to receive progressive augmentations of more than their numerical superiority, as the Colonies advance in wealth and population, this powerful and growing body, we are confident, will be unanimously and determinedly opposed to the introduction of those invidious and oppressive inequalities, which are felt to be so vexatious and mortifying in Britain, and which have been one of the most prominent causes of the recent convulsive struggles for reform, whose commotion has heaved, and is continuing to heave our Parent Country, like the tempest troubled ocean. Their opposition, founded at once upon religious principle and the spirit of liberty, natural to Britons generally, but peculiarly so to the British Dissenters, whose forefathers were its chief founders, its most glorious champions, its most faithful guardians—and sustained and invigorated by a sense of common interest, of natural, sacred, inalienable right, may be therefore expected to be united, strenuous and persevering.

The Scottish Colonists, whose points of religious difference, almost evanescent at home, are in these Colonies the mere shadow of a shade, will all, we trust—with one heart—with one soul—arouse themselves in the might of that spirit which has immortalised their forefathers, for the vindication of their national rights, for the honor of their national character, as well as for the interest of these Colonies and the maintenance of the connection with the Parent Country. We trust they will all to a man arouse themselves at this important crisis—they who have never aroused themselves in vain—to assert and to defend their equal rights, and to enforce upon the Government an equal and impartial regard to the interests, temporal and spiritual, of their British subjects, from the North as well as from the South of the Tweed. The feeling of self-respect, we conceive, should of itself suffice to array every Scotsman worthy of the name, in this cause. Whatever may have been the pusillanimity, the venality, the abject servility of a few, who are hunters after place and power, in whose breasts mean and sordid passions have extinguished the manly and generous pride and spirit of our country; the many will be found true to their blood and their birth—they will not tarnish the glorious memory of their forefathers, by suffering themselves tamely to be reduced to the humiliating condition of an inferior caste—they will bate nothing of their claims to the most perfect equality with the most favored, the most honored of their fellow-subjects; they are not inheritors of the stern spirit and undaunted resolution of their country, if they do not,

at this crisis, refuse all compromise—spurn every alternative, short of being put in possession to the uttermost of all the privileges and advantages which have hitherto been monopolized by the Protestant Episcopal Church. The characteristic patience and good temper with which they have hitherto borne themselves for so many years, in the reasonable and not unwarranted hope that the Government would not fail ultimately to do them justice, will now, we doubt not, give new ardour, new energy to their united resolve, to enforce their righteous claims, and, if it must be so, to do what every freeborn spirit must feel it would be a lack of virtue, as well as manhood, to forbear to do in such extremity—to *extort justice*. This, it will be said, is bold language, and, if not bordering on sedition, is at least disrespectful to the Government. May be so. *But patience abused becomes indignation*; and, as we would most fervently deprecate either civil war or the dissolution of our connection with Britain, we think it is well now, at length, to speak out, and since softer tones will not be heard, to lift up the voice, like a trumpet. It is better thus to do, than *to suffer things to come to such a pass*, that the sword alone, or revolution in some shape, *must right them*. We respect, we would fain be permitted ever to respect the powers that be; but we must first respect ourselves, which we do not, if we suffer our national rights to be trampled upon. We should ill serve the interests of our country, or discharge our duty to the Government, by a tame submission to wrong. The loud complaint, the indignant remonstrance, is far less to be dreaded than the secret whispers of discontent, the silent malediction, the deep buried resentment. What infatuation possesses the Government, that at this very moment, when the Canadas may be said to be a hotbed of factions—when they are springing up like the heads of the hydra, as numerous and as various as are the national, political and religious differences of the population—they should have deemed it, forsooth, a wise and well timed measure *for proving the sincerity of their professions, to bring about such a settlement of the long agitated question of the Reserved Lands, as would be satisfactory to the Colonists*—at this very juncture, of all others—to authorise the establishment of forty Rectories of the Church of England, in Upper Canada, and their endowment with some of the choicest portions of these lands. Really one is at a loss to credit the reality of such an act, in this country, in the present crisis—in the present mood and temper of the great body of the inhabitants. Need we wonder that the Government is weak and contemptible, which allows itself to be beguiled into acts which savour almost of insanity—of the most arrant stultification! This is palpably the work of party intrigue—the result of some secret, gross misrepresentation, to the Parent Government—a device hatched in some of the wise heads of the priesthood, or the bureaucracy, who have abused the confidence of the Governor, or practised upon his weakness and simplicity—it is the wisdom of the British Government turned into foolishness, by some of our precious transatlantic Ahitophels, if indeed they can be complimented with the most faint re-

resemblance to any measure of sense or sagacity, that could entitle them to the honor of such a comparison. Had not their political vision, insect like, been confined within the most contracted dimensions, it could not have entered into the imaginations of their hearts to venture upon a measure like this; a measure, we hesitate not to say, which, under existing circumstances, bears the clearest stamp of downright fatuity!

This very notable specimen of *the wisdom with which the world is governed*—the very antiphrasis of Minerva, salient from the brain of Jove—must have sprung out of the addle-heads of some such pious and enlightened spirits as a learned dignitary of the law in Upper Canada, who was pleased, in a memorable speech delivered in the House of Assembly, March 4, 1835, to express himself in the following terms, *while advocating the exclusive right of the Church of England to the whole of the goodly appropriation of one-seventh of the whole territory of that vast Province*:—"And now, Mr. Speaker, I will ask, why is the Established Church thus assailed; can it be alleged against her that her Litany is not holy—that her doctrines are not pure—that her practices and principles are in any respect reprehensible!" What more of immaculate purity or infallibility has Rome ever claimed to herself! What would this idolater of the Protestant Church of England not have been, had he been nurtured in Spain or Italy? But this is nothing to the height which he soars on the Pegasusian wing of an exalted devoteeism, into the sublimest altitude of hyperbole—in the next paragraph! "It is not for *human lips* to utter the eulogy of the Church of England;" (*a human institution tho!*) "as well might we attempt to add dignity to the attributes of the Deity, by the praises of mortal man!" We have lately heard a good deal more than was conducive to peace or edification in this Lower Province, touching the *questio vexata* of the idolatries of the Romish Church. And not a little good indignation and effervescent zeal were expended on a recent occasion in the metropolitan city, by some clergymen of the Church of England, whose spirits, like Paul in the midst of the idolatries of Athens, were stirred within them, in the prospect of the public abominations of the *Fete de Dieu*. They may find employment for their superabundant zeal, without going so far from home. What lustration, we would ask, will suffice, in the estimation of these abhorers of idolatry, to purge their own Zion from the foul pollution of such monstrous idolatry as that of the learned Solicitor-General of Upper Canada, whose deluded eye sees in the mere creature of human wisdom and policy—an institution more than divine—of such transcendent purity and perfection as to rival the attributes of the Deity? We really pity the Church of England, thus mangled by the foolish adulation of her votaries; and, notwithstanding the eulogy of the learned Solicitor, on the faultless perfection of her Litany, we would humbly presume to recommend the addition of another petition on her own behalf. *From foolish friends and interested flatterers, good Lord deliver us!*

Such advocates as this learned jurist are, like the elephants in oriental warfare, very much more mischievous to their allies than to their enemies! But, to be serious, this Rodomontade affords a very striking indication of the length to which Mr. HAGERMAN and his kith, kin and allies are prepared to go, to force upon the country a dominant Church. And the country, say we, will richly deserve to be saddled with this burden, if it can be so silly as to believe that it is "her holy Litany, her pure doctrines, her irreprehensible principles and practices," which have captivated so absolutely the supreme affections of Mr. HAGERMAN's pious soul, and that he is not rather actuated by the unerring instinct of self-love—the shrewdness of that worldly wisdom which has revealed to him the *vision beatific*, of what and how many goodly fruits of temporal power and influence would accrue to himself and his party from this Church triumphant. These *mirables amores*, which have enflamed the enthusiastic breast of this admirer of the *State Church*, are raptures flowing from the same source, and fed with the same aliment, as those which raised the cry—the *shout* among the silversmiths and priests belonging to the Temple of Diana, at Ephesus, when their craft was in danger, from the rude assaults of the eloquence of the Apostle PAUL—"All with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out great is Diana of the Ephesians!" We shrewdly suspect that Mr. HAGERMAN, in the present case, is pretty much what DEMETRIUS the silversmith was at Ephesus, the leader and orator of his fellow-craftsmen! The sentiments which he has expressed in this speech, are common to him, with the would-be aristocracy or oligarchy of Toronto. We would boldly ask the question, what will that Province lack of the ultratism and Orangeism of Ireland, when men of such overstrained zeal and devotion, in the cause of Church domination, are possessed of the ascendancy, and can wield for their party purposes all the powers of Church and State! Let the Colonies beware of such men—self is the prime and ultimate object of their idolatry; and whatever professions of patriotism, principle or piety they may make, they seek only to aggrandize themselves and their party. To the misgovernment, which, we believe, is almost wholly chargeable upon their evil counsels and evil influence, we owe our present unhappy distractions, and if Governors of greater talent, liberality and independence, than have hitherto presided over these Colonies, are not sent out to put an end to their pernicious sway, the ties which unite to us to the Parent Country, will speedily be broken. Would we sweep away the Radicals and Anarchists, purge the Government and the legislature of all *ultraism* and *Orangeism*—of all who would govern these Colonies by party or priestly influence! Remove the cause, and the effect will cease.

But to return from this digression, we have been contending that the system of exclusive or co-ordinate Church establishments, will encounter opposition from almost all the great bodies of our population. Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregation-

alists, &c., French, Scotch, Irish, American, Anglo-Canadians, nay, even in the bosom of the Church of England herself, many, we verily believe, the majority of her lay members, will be found to disapprove of the principle. And where will the system find favor and support? Who are they, and what is their number or worth, to whom it will prove acceptable? And what advantages will accrue to the country, or what strength or stability to the Government, from their services or attachment? Those men who are more desirous to augment the wealth and influence of the clergy, than to promote the spiritual interests of the Church. Those who care little for the great end of true religion, but are intent upon having a dominant Church and a powerful and wealthy clergy, as a fulcrum of their party—as an engine of state. Those men whose patriotism means an ardent cupidity to obtain the *golden eggs of the goose*—whose only virtue, whose only value in their eyes, consists in her prolific quality. Those who are ambitious of monopolizing all power to themselves, and of carrying on the government by a system of influence, will naturally seek alliance and confederation with a state clergy—a secularised priesthood—will be great sticklers for a dominant Church, for the purpose of forming an oligarchy of placemen, place-hunters, pensioners and parsons. And what form of ecclesiastical establishment will they naturally prefer? That which is most subservient, most manageable; best organized for performing the services which they require. Such, without all doubt, are the spirit and the views of those, who have long been labouring hard, and, it appears, are yet as far as ever from relaxing or suspending their efforts to graft upon the purely democratic constitution of our Colonial society, an aristocratic Church. This is, in fact, to impose upon the country the worst species of aristocracy—a secularised priesthood—and that too, where we have no hereditary lay aristocracy to balance or controul so formidable a power.

Were such a priesthood to spread over the land, it is impossible that it should not operate with the most baneful influence, upon the growth and prosperity of these Colonies. It inevitably becomes an engine, and a powerful and ready engine too, of faction exerting, in concert with its natural allies, a combined influence, against which the indignant feelings of the whole community are sure to be directed, perhaps in vain, or if at last successful, only after a long and dubious struggle. It must be evident that an educated body of men, possessed of the influence over the popular mind, which is inseparable from the clerical profession, united under one head, and that head placed near the ear of Government, and always possessed of more than a due share of influence there, moving on all occasions, where their peculiar interest is involved, with prompt, secret, unanimous activity—with their eyes stedfastly fixed on their own aggrandizement in the first degree, and holding the welfare of the country and the interest of true religion secondary and subordinate to this—would create such an encumbrance in the machine of Government, as would greatly impede its free action and disturb and derange the natural and desirable course

of things. But it may be said, that it is in the contemplation of Government to establish two or more co-ordinate Churches—to place them on a footing of equality, and to treat them with impartial regard. Could we even give credit to the Government for perfect sincerity in these professions, while every day proves that their acts are in direct repugnance to them, as well as to the indignantly expressed feelings and loud and general remonstrances of the Colonies—if we could believe that the Government are disposed and prepared to do all that in them lies, to dispense with a steady unwavering hand equal justice, impartial favor, to all the Churches which are proposed to be formed into co-ordinate establishments; while we see that they have been going on for a long course of years, heaping favors, honors, emoluments, powers, privileges, property, exclusively upon one favorite, and giving to the others nothing, or nothing but empty promises, or merely some paltry boon, to stop the voice of clamour—to bribe them to silence—to lull them into a temporary slumber, until the design of giving a complete and lasting dominancy to the one, shall be consummated and fixed irreversibly—were not all this patent, palpable, undeniable, we should still contend that the project of two or more co-ordinate establishments, is neither practicable nor, if it were practicable, is it available for the end in view. The State Church has influence at home, and in the Colony, so vastly preponderant over every other, that nothing can be more hopeless than the idea of counterpoising it by any single rival, or even by several. Besides the undue and pernicious ascendancy, arising out of that fatal original blunder by which the Bishop of Quebec was admitted to a seat in the Legislative and Executive Councils, an error which has not been subsequently amended or mitigated, but, on the other hand, aggravated by other not less exceptionable augmentations of his power and influence, as well as by the ill-judged communication of similar power and influence to other Churchmen—it only requires the most superficial observation to convince every unprejudiced mind, that no art and no industry would be wanting on the part of a powerful and ambitious hierarchy, even had it not been elevated to a higher and more advantageous position than its competitors, to depress them, and to exalt and aggrandize itself; and, we may add to this, that from the very nature and genius of such a Church, it is inevitable that her clergy shall possess a very decided superiority in all the tactics of that warfare of which secular ambition is the spring, and secular aggrandisement the aim and end. The Legislative Councils, or at least a decided majority of them, in both Provinces, have been, and we suspect still are, in favour of the exclusive claims of the Church of England, in their utmost extent; and to this spirit, in a great measure, may we attribute the little confidence reposed in this branch of the legislature, and its want of due weight in the political scale. This, we believe still more to be the leaning of the Executive Councils, while scarcely one of our Governors seems to have been aware of, or to have laid any adequate stress upon the important obligation of shewing occasionally

some demonstrations of just regard to other Churches. They have all, without exception, confined the light of their countenance to the small section of the State Church, and have deported themselves as if all other sects were nonentities, or as if attentions and courtesies to them were neither called for by policy or principle. We make bold to affirm, that this fact alone is demonstrative of their incapacity for the successful government of such a country as this; and, indeed, how could it be otherwise, since they come out utterly ignorant of the genius and circumstances of the population? The *bureaucracy*, as it has been very aptly designated, are, almost to a man, devoted exclusively to the cause of the Church of England, and the strong and intimate ties which knit them to the heads or rulers of the Church by their common interests—personal—domestic—or party—are plain and palpable to the public eye, and not difficult to be traced in almost every several or individual instance. The natural instinct of self-interest and ambition, leads all who are possessors or candidates and expectants of place and power to court the favor of the dominant Church—all who seek for themselves, their families, kindred or partizans, public offices and honors—are fain to enter into alliance, offensive and defensive with that body, which, from its ascendancy at home, as well as in these Colonies, can do more to serve their interests, to further their ambitious views, than all others put together. As amber attracts to itself all the lighter and more chaffy substances that are floating about in the atmosphere, so the Court, and the Court Church naturally draw into them similar elements, and form as it were, a *sort of Limbo of Vanity*. A fellow feeling arises out of a common interest, and the bonds of the alliance become rivetted just in proportion as the means or the prospect of reciprocating services and benefits, are multiplied and extended. Such confederacies or combinations, if not ostensibly and avowedly, yet tacitly and by an implied compact, will always be found to exist between such parties as we have described, whenever the policy against which we protest is in any measure pursued or adhered to by the Government. An exclusive Church establishment, with a Prelatic Clergy, thus abetted by the most powerful, united and stable factions or juntos in the Colonies, can find no adequate check or counterpoise, even in two or more co-ordinate establishments, whose organization is not calculated to operate so efficiently as that of an Episcopal Church for purposes of a secular nature; and they would therefore inevitably sink under the ascendant influence and indefatigable persevering ambition of their more able and practised rival. The only adequate security against such a baneful domination, already, we lament to say, in some measure planted and rooted in our soil, will be found in the immediate recognition of the perfect liberty and equality of all sects—and the impartially equal extension of the same measure of bounty and favor to all—or in the equally impartial withholding from all of public patronage and endowments. This is the system of the United States. It has grown naturally out of the circumstances of the country, and

the state of society there; and since we have seen that the constitution of society in British North America is perfectly homogeneous with that of Republican America, the conclusion is evident, that any attempt to force things out of their natural channel, can only tend to derangement and disorganisation, and must ultimately prove a signal failure, recoiling upon and overwhelming its authors, and convulsing the whole body politic.

Though much additional argument and illustration might be adduced for the further elucidation of the Plan and enforcement of the Principles of the Projected Society, of which we now submit this Prospectus to the judgment of the public; we feel that it would far exceed the due limits of this preliminary address, to attempt to exhaust so copious a subject. We perhaps owe an apology for the length to which these remarks have been extended, which, we trust our readers will find in the importance and interest of the subject; while the variety of the topics brought under discussion, taken in connection with the narrow limits into which it has been necessary to compress them, and the hurried manner in which they have been thrown together, almost at random, will, we hope, not be pleaded in vain—against the rigour of criticism—in extenuation of inaccuracies and imperfections, whether of matter or style.

We would intimate, in conclusion, that no time will be lost to complete the organisation of the Society—that its originators are determined to prosecute the design, even were they, in the first instance, to stand alone and unsupported—assured that this cause must ultimately triumph—that in this age, and in this land, no power or policy of man can prevail against it. They are well persuaded, however, that they start in their career with every happy omen—with every auspicious hope and prospect of a speedy and glorious triumph; they know, and are assured, that in the temperate, manly, and enlightened assertion of the great principles now expounded, they will carry along with them the hearts, the sympathies of the vast majority of the Colonial population; they reckon, with confidence, upon the warm, strenuous, united, unflinching support and co-operation of all the true friends of liberty and religion—of all who wisely and well love this or the Parent Country—of all who, respecting our common nature and our common and equal rights as men, feel their hearts beating with a warm and generous ardour in every cause that tends to advance the virtue, the dignity, the happiness of our race.

From the exposition now submitted, of the views and ends of the Projected Society, it cannot be denied that it offers to the consideration of the public, a question of the most momentous importance, which derives a vastly increased interest from the crisis which has arisen in the affairs of these Colonies, a question of which the decision will form a memorable epoch in our history, and ultimately either lead to our separation from the Parent State, or draw closer the ties which unite us. We are persuaded that the adoption of the views here recommended, would have an immediate and powerful influence in harmonizing the

now jarring elements of society—in allaying and composing public excitements, jealousies and agitations—in strengthening and assisting the Government, by the general confidence and attachment which it would inspire—and we cannot conceive any other way of meeting and obviating the difficulties which have so long perplexed and embarrassed, and now, at last, almost paralyzed the Government. We know no other course of policy so well adapted to the circumstances of these Colonies, so calculated to render the Government popular, and so likely to prove a panacea of the evils under which we labour. Let us recognise and act on these principles, and nothing more is wanting for the most speedy and complete developement of our resources, for the security—for the consummation of our liberties, for our attaining the highest measure of social prosperity and happiness. These principles, in fine, involve the vital interests of our country. They are of paramount importance. Every thing must be sacrificed rather than abandon them. We hesitate not to declare, that we shall regard as the last and greatest of all the evils which could befall us, the continued existence of a system of Government not in perfect unison with them. We know no men, no parties, so dangerous, so mischievous, as those who stand in opposition to these principles. We have no confidence in those who are lukewarm in their support. Neither governors, nor legislators, nor representatives of the people, will be able to win, to secure, general and lasting credit and popularity, or, consequently, to render any important service to the country, who do not cordially embrace and honestly and consistently act upon these enlarged views. He who would be accredited as a real patriot and reformer, must adopt these principles as the first, as the fundamental and most sacred articles of his political creed. No man, who does not hold these truly Catholic sentiments, will, however artfully he may mask or vizard his political faith for a time, be able to stand long in the confidence of a people to whom all narrow and exclusive principles are abhorrent. It will be the duty of all, therefore, who approve these views, and who are disposed to unite with us in promoting and enforcing the practical recognition and application of them, to admit of no compromise, of no neutrality. Those who are not for us, are against us. The most decisive and unflinching course, in a cause of such vital importance and in the present critical juncture, will be the shortest, the safest, and, what is more, probably attended with least violence or effervescence. The spirit of the age, and the country, is on our side. The great body of the population are heart and soul with us. Every disinterested, enlightened and honest man—whatever be his creed—is our friend, our ally. Let one simultaneous expression be given of the opinion—of the feeling—of the determination of the people in favor of these principles—and the cause is triumphant. We need only point to the expression of the views of His Majesty's Government lately elicited in the British Parliament, to prove that when the voice of the country has once unequivocally declared the will of the people, with respect to their rights and interests, there will

be no disposition to oppose or to evade their claims, so far as they may be just, reasonable, or practicable. The obstacles, whatever they may be, are in the Colonies—not in the Parent Country—and these obstacles are only serious, are only formidable, because the people do not arouse themselves, do not speak out. Let them say the word, and their adversaries are put to shame—to silence.

In fine, until these principles are fully and universally recognized—until they are impartially and effectively reduced to practice, on the part of the Government—and until the agitations and collisions, which have arisen out of the conflicting views and claims of the various parties and factions into which the Colonies are divided, *shall be charmed into peace by the proclamation of universal and equal religious liberty and privilege, without distinction or exception of any sect or party*—we shall never emerge from our present unhappy state of disorganization, but shall feel every day adding new strength and new virulence to our disorders, until, at no distant date, we are plunged in all the horrors of civil war, perhaps overwhelmed amid the storms of revolutionary anarchy. We hope better things. We trust that the day is now come, when all honest, sound-hearted, enlightened friends of the Colony and of the Parent Country, will come forward, as at the call of Divine Providence, and with manly energy and determination contribute each his several part to our redemption from the imminent perils which now threaten us, and with one heart, with one voice, implore the Parent Government to establish, on the foundation of the principles now stated, such an order of things as will ensure, in future, the permanent peace, union and happiness of all classes of the population—strengthening the bond of attachment to Britain—by inspiring all of us with the happy assurance, that, as our prosperity is, at once her glory and her interest, so it is the sole and supreme aim and object of her Colonial policy.

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